

Quality Control Guidance for Standard Biological Technical Documents and Reports

Prepared by the Division of Environmental
Analysis, Office of Biological and Technical
Assistance

In consultation with

The Biological Consultancy Group

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Quality Control Guidance for Standard Biological Technical Documents and Reports

As part of the Department's continuing effort to streamline the environmental process and facilitate development of well crafted, high quality environmental documents and technical reports, the Division of Environmental Analysis (DEA) has adopted new quality control standards and standard outlines and templates for the organization of Biological Assessment (BA), Biological Evaluation (BE), Natural Environment Study Reports (NES Reports) and simple natural environment reviews (NES-MI (Minimum Impact)). These new formats, templates, and guidance were developed by the Biological Consultancy Group in partnership with FHWA to facilitate and streamline reviews of the Department's biological technical studies. Districts are directed to develop quality control processes to assure that well crafted, high quality environmental documents and technical reports are produced. The quality control process will be documented and available in the project file for review.

All new BA, BE, NES and NES(MI) documents prepared for projects on the State Highway System will be prepared by or reviewed by an Associate Environmental Planner (NS), or by a Senior Environmental Planner with experience as an Associate Environmental Planner (NS).

Quality control processes will contain the following elements:

1. Author review, using an appropriate checklist, to assure that:
 - a. critical elements of the document or report are addressed,
 - b. the document is readable by the target audience,
 - c. the document demonstrates good writing practice,
 - d. the document style and format meets standards,
 - e. the document contents are accurate, and
 - f. the contents are presented in a consistent manner.
2. Biological Peer Review, using an appropriate checklist, to assure that:
 - a. the document type is appropriate for the project,
 - b. critical technical elements of the document or report are addressed,
 - c. technical issues are addressed in a technically appropriate manner and to an appropriate level of detail for the project,
 - d. the document contents are accurate, and
 - e. the contents are presented in a consistent manner.
3. Technical Review to assure that:
 - a. non-routine biological issues are reviewed by a biological technical specialist, for
 - i. checklist issues
 - ii. complex species or habitat issues,
 - iii. complex wetland delineation issues

- iv. complex mitigation issues
 - v. complex affects, effects or impact issues, and
 - vi. other complex issues
 - b. non-biological technical issues are reviewed by appropriate technical specialists, when appropriate, such as
 - i. Construction,
 - ii. Design,
 - iii. Landscape Architecture
 - iv. Legal,
 - v. Office Engineer,
 - vi. Maintenance,
 - vii. Project Management,
 - viii. Right of Way, and
 - ix. others as necessary.
4. Editorial Review to assure that appropriate language elements are used as presented in the standard document templates for the BA, BE, NES and NES (MI), and with particular attention to:
- a. style,
 - b. readability and jargon,
 - c. grammar, and
 - d. spelling.
5. Supervisor Review and Approval, using an appropriate checklist, to assure that:
- a. commitments within the document or report are appropriate, acceptable to, and as necessary, approved by affected Divisions such as Project Management, Design, Office Engineer, Construction, Right of Way and Maintenance.
 - i. reviews by affected divisions, or review opportunities, should be documented on a circulation sheet,
 - b. documents and reports are appropriate for the intended recipients,
 - c. documents and reports are designed to facilitate efficient reviews, and
 - d. documents are readable by the intended recipients.